

Tom Horne
Superintendent

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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HORNE ANNOUNCES FEDERAL MONEY FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

Will partner with Washington Elementary and ASU West

PHOENIX (October 28, 2003) – State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne today announced that the U.S. Department of Education has awarded \$787,541 in Jacob K. Javits Gifted & Talented grant money to a partnership including the Arizona Department of Education, Washington Elementary School District and ASU West. The money will be used over a three-year period to develop research-based programs to increase the number of gifted learners programs for students who are still in the process of learning the English language. Washington Elementary is the only Arizona district to receive these funds.

“There are two very important education priorities being addressed with this program,” Horne said. “One is that children who are not proficient in the English language get the instruction they need so they are proficient as soon as possible. The second is that more attention needs to be devoted to the education of the average and gifted students. This grant will be used to fund classroom research that will achieve these goals.”

Under the proposal, the Department of Education will provide services to assist the Washington Elementary School District in collecting empirical data to identify gifted students with limited English skills who may be included in the program. The program itself will be implemented using students selected from the Washington district. ASU West will train teachers in methods used for instructing children who fit the profile for the research.

“We are so excited and appreciative of the opportunities that this grant gives students, parents and teachers in the Washington Elementary School District,” said Andree Charlson, district program specialist for English learners. “For English Language learners, those students demonstrating gifted and talented characteristics, will be provided with extended day and summer school classes to support and enhance their gifts and talents in order to gain entrance into the District’s formal gifted program. For parents the grant will provide classes to support their child’s gifts and talents at home. For teachers, the grant will provide funding so that they can pursue a gifted teaching endorsement, through ASU West, focused on the English language learner”

Dr. Michael Awender, Dean at ASU West's College of Education is also applauding the news.

“This project attempts to prepare teachers to identify gifted minority students, develop programs for them, and thereby improve the performance and achievement of these students. We at ASU West are very pleased to be collaborating with the Washington Elementary School District and the Arizona Department of Education on this very important project that should be of vital interest to the entire state of Arizona,” he said.

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